REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment and reconsideration are respectfully requested in view of the remarks made herein.

Claims 1-15 are pending and stand rejected. Claims 1-7, 11, 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Monro (WO 98/37700, cited in the IDS filed 19 June 2002).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with, and explicitly traverses, the reason for rejecting the claims.

Claim 1 recites:

> 1. (A method of coding (2) a signal (S) comprising blocks of values to obtain a scalable bit-stream (O,BS), the method comprising the steps of:
>
> representing (20) each block as a sequence of bit planes (BP), wherein most significant bits of the values form a most significant bit plane (BP_{MSB}) and respective less significant bits of the values form respective less significant bit planes; and
>
> scanning and transmitting (21,23) significant coefficients values in an order of decreasing bit plane (BP) significance;
>
> wherein for each bit plane the step of scanning and transmitting (21,23) is performed in a rectangular scan zone (R_{MAX}, C_{MAX}) starting from a corner of the block, wherein R_{MAX} represents a maximum row number and C_{MAX} represents a maximum column number determined as the outermost positions of newly significant coefficients within each bit plane and said R_{MAX} and C_{MAX} values are transmitted in said bit-stream. (emphasis added)

Monro discloses a method of image compression that includes significance switching of DCT coefficients in block-based embedded DCT processes. Monro discloses that a mask is transmitted to indicate the determined newly significant bits (see page 10, line 6).

The Office Action refers to page 9, line 20-page 10, line 13 of Monro for disclosing the determination of a maximum row and a maximum column number and that these values are transmitted in the bit, as is recited in the claims.

However, a reading of this section reveals that Monro discloses the transmission of a mask indicating the position of newly significant bits in a bit plane. The length of the mask is determined by the position of the last newly significant bit. In the example provided by Monro, i.e., Figure 3, the coefficients in position 2, 3, 6, 7, 13, 14 and 17 are

newly significant and a mask of 0011001100000011001_2 plus a [Stop Character] is transmitted to indicate which bits are newly significant. For example, the first 4 bits of the mask (i.e., 0011) indicate that coefficients in position 2 and 3, starting at position 0, are newly significant. Furthermore, the mask length is 18 bits as the coefficient in position 17, starting at position 0, is the last significant bit.

Hence, rather than determining a maximum row and maximum column, which in the example disclosed by Monro would be 3 and 5, respectively, and subsequently transmitting these values, Monro teaches transmitting a mask to indicated the position of newly significant bits.

In another aspect of the invention, Monro discloses using a length character plus a mask to indicate the position of newly significant bits. In this aspect of the Monro device, a transmission of "18 plus 0011001100000011001_2" would be associated with the example shown if Figure 3. (see page 10, line 26 - 2). In still another aspect of the device disclosed by Monro, Monro discloses preceding the mask with a Manhattan depth of its highest order. Monro discloses that in the case of the example shown in Figure 3, "three extra mask bits are set (with the mask being assumed to terminate at the end of the zig-zag line that includes the given Manhattan depth.)" (see page 11, lines 5-7). In the example of Figure 3, this aspect would result in the transmission of "5 plus $00110011000001100100 0_2$" wherein the transmission would be continued for coefficients in positions 18, 19 and 20, which are not significant values.

Accordingly, Monro fails to disclose that blocks are scanned to determine a maximum row number and a maximum column number and the maximum row and column numbers are transmitted in the bit-steam, as is recited in the claims.

It is well recognized that to constitute a rejection pursuant to 35 USC 102, i.e., anticipation, all material elements recited in a claim must be found in one unit of prior art. For the reason shown above, Monro cannot be said to anticipate the present invention, because Monro fails to disclose each and every element recited in the claim.

Having shown that Monro fails to disclose each and every element recited in the claim, applicant submits that the reason for the rejection of the claim has been overcome and the rejection can no longer be sustained. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claim.

With regard to independent claims 7, 11, 12 and 14, these claims recite subject matter similar to that recited in claim 1 and each of these claims has been rejected for the same reason used in rejecting claim 1. For the remarks made with regard to the rejection of claim 1, which are reassert, as if in full, herein, in response to the rejection of the above referred-to claims, applicant submits that the reason for rejecting these claims has been overcome and the rejection can no longer be sustained. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

With regard the remaining claims these claims ultimately depend from the independent claims which have been shown to contain subject matter not disclosed by, and, hence, allowable over, the reference cited. Accordingly, these claims are also allowable by virtue of their dependency from an allowable base claim.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Monro and Jiankun Li, as applied to claim 8, in further combination with Fujikawa (USP no. 4,972,260) and over Monro and Kleihorst, as applied to claim 9, in further combination with Fujikawa.

As argued above, the combination of Monro and Li and Monro and Kleihorst fails to teach a material element claimed. Fujikawa is silent with regard to the element missing from Monro/Li and Monro/Kleihorst. Hence, the combination of the cited references fails to render obvious the invention as recited in claim 10, as the combined device fails to disclose all the elements claimed.

For at least this reason, applicant submits that the reason for the rejection has been overcome and can no longer be sustained. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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